



# SAFETY --- Network

SUMMER 2004

[www.michigan.gov/ohsp](http://www.michigan.gov/ohsp)

VOL. 11, NO. 3

## Alcohol/drug-related traffic deaths decrease in 2003

Michigan traffic deaths resulting from alcohol and/or drug involvement reached record lows in 2003, according to figures compiled by the Michigan State Police, Criminal Justice Information Center.

During 2003, 442 people died in alcohol and/or drug involved traffic crashes, a 4 percent decrease from 2002. The percent of alcohol and/or drug-involved fatalities fell to 34.5 percent of all fatalities, a 27 percent decrease since 1990 when it represented nearly 47 percent of all traffic deaths.

"Strong laws, strict enforcement and intense publicity have contributed to our positive decline in deaths attributed to alcohol or drugs," said Michael L. Prince, division director of the Office of Highway Safety Planning. "We also know that increased safety belt use is having an impact on alcohol-involved fatalities."

Prince added it is difficult to tell what role the state's new drunk driving law played in the decline, given that it took effect September 30, 2003.

The new law lowered the level at which a person is considered a drunk driver, from .10 blood alcohol content to .08.

Overall, Michigan reported 391,488 traffic crashes in 2003, 1,172 fatal crashes and 76,598 injury crashes. The number of people killed increased slightly, from 1,279 in 2002 to 1,283 in 2003. Injuries went down by over 6 percent from 2002, and represented the lowest number in the past 15 years.

## Click It or Ticket campaign kicks off May 24

### 800 safety belt enforcement zones planned

More than 500 Michigan law enforcement agencies will make safety belt enforcement a priority May 24 through June 6 as part of a national *Click It or Ticket* safety belt enforcement mobilization. The enforcement blitz will include nearly 800 safety belt enforcement zones conducted by 200 agencies throughout the two-week period.

What began as a pilot program in May 2003 with only 130 zones has been greatly expanded to include 48 counties where the nearly 800 enforcement zones will reach 90 percent of the state's population.

Federal traffic safety dollars are allowing for the intense and visible enforcement over the two-week period.

Enforcement will be supplemented by three weeks of paid advertising to ensure motorists throughout the state are aware of the program.

The new television ad, titled "How It Works," features Sergeant Kevin Beasley and Trooper Marco Jones from the Michigan State Police and Officer Dave Metts of the Meridian Township Police Department.

Counties receiving funding for special overtime enforcement include: Allegan, Alpena, Bay, Berrien, Calhoun, Charlevoix, Chippewa, Clinton, Crawford, Delta, Dickinson, Eaton, Emmet, Genesee, Gogebic, Grand Traverse, Ingham, Ionia, Iron, Isabella, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kent, Lapeer, Leelanau, Lenawee, Livingston, Mason, Mackinac, Macomb, Marquette, Menominee, Midland, Monroe, Muskegon, Oakland, Oceana, Ogemaw, Ottawa, Saginaw, St. Clair, St. Joseph, Schoolcraft, Shiawasee, Van Buren, Washtenaw, Wayne, and Wexford.

A day-to-day listing of enforcement zones as well as results will be posted at [www.michigan.gov/ohsp](http://www.michigan.gov/ohsp).



# DIRECTOR'S CORNER

**MICHAEL L. PRINCE**

*Division Director, Office of Highway Safety Planning*

As the travel season heats up, summer will begin and end with all-out efforts to increase safety belt use.

We have an ambitious goal for Michigan in 2004 – to reach 90 percent belt use, making Michigan only the fifth state, and the first state east of California to accomplish this feat.

The level of energy among the traffic safety community at the thought of achieving this feat is truly encouraging. Not only am I confident that this can be done, I believe that this will happen.

When I first left a career in law enforcement in 1990 and joined the OHSP, safety belt use in Michigan was around 50 percent. In less than fifteen years, we have increased belt use to 85 percent, leading the region and placing Michigan as the eleventh highest state in the country.

I have been asked in media interviews, “isn’t 85 percent good enough.” My response is no, not when we know we have the ability to save lives by continuing to increase safety belt use. For every one percent increase in belt use, we save approximately 10 lives and prevent 130 crippling and disfiguring injuries.

90 percent will save 50 people. These are our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, and children. That is fifty times that a police officer or physician will not have to notify a family that a loved one has died, simply because we backed-off thinking that 85 per-

***We have an ambitious goal for Michigan in 2004 – to reach 90 percent belt use.***

cent was “good enough.”

Across Michigan, law enforcement agencies are prepared for an unprecedented enforcement campaign that coincides with the Memorial Day holiday period to increase safety belt use through high intensity crackdowns on unbuckled motorists.

OHSP is providing federal grant funding to 48 counties in Michigan over Memorial Day to boost belt use through safety belt enforcement zones. These counties comprise 90 percent of the state’s population, so it’s going to be difficult to travel anywhere in the state between May 24 and June 6

without seeing one of these zones.

Safety belt enforcement zones are enforcement areas marked by special, portable “safety belt enforcement zone” signs alerting motorists they have entered a zone. Zones are conducted on roadways where crash problems are prevalent or belt use is low. One officer serves as a spotter, radioing unbelted motorist information to nearby marked patrol cars that pull over the offending motorist.

OHSP piloted these zones in eight counties in May 2003 and watched belt use jump to 85 percent. Think of the impact having them in 48 counties will make.

To finish off Michigan’s summer travel season, another enforcement blitz is planned August 30 – September 12.

OHSP is reaching out to state departments, insurers, health care providers, insurance groups, businesses, associations, and grass-roots organizations to help spread the word.

Help Michigan reach 90 percent belt use in 2004 and join that elite group of states at or above 90 percent safety belt use.

You can help by hanging a banner or a poster at your workplace, handing out flyers about Michigan’s safety belt law to your co-workers, tell your friends, neighbors, and children about increased enforcement this summer, or find other ways to assist by linking to OHSP’s website at [www.michigan.gov/ohsp](http://www.michigan.gov/ohsp).

But most importantly, make sure everyone in your vehicle is buckled up every time. Fifty people are counting on us. Let’s not let them down.

***Safety Network*** is published quarterly by the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning

Vol. 11, No. 3

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# PAAM Legal Update

2004 PA 19 (House Bill 4887) MCL 257.653a requires that a driver move over when a patrol car is stopped along the highway with its lights activated. This has now been expanded to include tow trucks, otherwise called "road service vehicles." This law goes into effect on June 2, 2004.

2004 PA 25 (Senate Bill 842) establishes the new crime of illegal possession of a portable signal preemption device. (New MCL cite: 257.616a) If a person possesses the device, it is a 90-day misdemeanor. If it is used, then it is a two-year felony. If there is a crash, it is a five-year felony, and if an injury resulting in a serious impairment occurs, it is a ten-year felony. If a death results because of the use of the device it is a fifteen-year felony. This law goes into effect June 14, 2004.

Significant changes to the minor in possession (MIP) law occurred during this legislative session. To change the definition of what consume means for a minor in possession the legislature passed Senate Bill 637. 2004 PA 63. *People v Rutledge* 250 Mich App 1 (2002) stated that once a minor drank alcohol, it was no longer alcohol and therefore the minor could not be charged with a minor in possession or consuming alcohol. The new law now prohibits "any bodily alcohol content" in a minor. It is the same language that is used in the zero tolerance law for a minor driving a car.

In addition, the statute states that if a minor drank the alcohol legally either in Canada or Wisconsin, it is an affirmative defense during a trial. It is not an issue on citing a minor with MIP.

NOTE: The affirmative defense does not effect the zero tolerance section for the OWI law. It is still illegal for a minor to drive with a BAC of .02 or more.

Senate Bill 637 also provides for the possibility of diversion for a first MIP conviction whether over or under the age of 17. (The minor is considered an adult for the criminal courts at the age of 17.) If granted and the conditions ordered by the court are fulfilled, the minor can then state that he or she does not have a conviction. But to ensure that this provision is used only once, the courts shall send all convictions for MIP to the Secretary of State's office to maintain the records. If they are placed in a diversion program, there will be no public record kept, just one that law enforcement and prosecutors can access through the Secretary of State's Office.

Finally the new MIP law provides for jail when a person is convicted of MIP for the second or third time

and fails to complete any treatment, screening, or community service activities ordered by the court, or fails to pay any fine.

For a second offense MIP (not including one involving the diversion program) the court can order an MIP to jail for up to 30 days. For a third or subsequent MIP conviction, a minor can be ordered to jail for 60 days for failing to complete any treatment, screening, or community service activities. This law goes into effect September 1, 2004.

*Consult your prosecutor before adopting practices suggested by reports in this article. The statutes and court decisions in this article are reported to help you keep up with trends in the law. Discuss your practices that relate to these statutes and cases with your commanding officers, police legal advisors, and the prosecuting attorney, before changing your practices in reliance on a reported court decision or legislative change.*



## Elderly mobility conference to showcase best practices

The North American Conference on Elderly Mobility (NACEM) will be held at the Marriott Renaissance Center in Detroit September 12-15, 2004.

The conference will focus on best practices that have improved elderly transportation mobility from organizations around the world. NACEM 2004 will feature national and international speakers who will provide participants with cutting edge, "hands-on" information to help them address transportation issues of the elderly population and all motorists in the future.

For additional information on the conference, contact Diane Drago, conference coordinator, at (517) 663-5147 or [DMSdiane@concentric.net](mailto:DMSdiane@concentric.net)

More information is also available at [www.tiami.org](http://www.tiami.org).

## Signs, reflectors hold little promise in reducing car-deer crashes

Conclusions from a multi-year Kent County study show outside interventions, such as warning signs or wildlife reflectors, hold little promise in reducing deer-vehicle collisions. The study was commissioned by the Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) and conducted by White Water Associates, Inc.

Kent County was chosen based on its high number of deer-vehicle collisions, which is consistently the highest in the state. The study involved deer-vehicle collision data from nine years (1992–2000), with the experimental portion running from 1998 to 2000.

The project included an experimental study of “novel” seasonal deer collision warning signs on selected stretches of road and a trial of wildlife warning reflectors on other stretches of road.

“This study reinforces the challenge we face regarding the complex issue of reducing deer-vehicle collisions,” said OHSP Division Director Michael L. Prince. “This information has been shared with the Michigan Deer Crash Coalition to assist with their ongoing efforts to reduce crashes.”

A summary states: Neither the warning signs nor the wildlife reflectors showed any effects of reducing deer-vehicle crashes on the study roads. There may be situations or landscapes where these techniques

can be effective, but in this particular landscape mixture of development and agriculture, the results were not promising, and certainly not cost effective.

The study did find that the probability of experiencing a deer-vehicle collision is higher on roads that pass near water-courses and on roads that traverse a patchwork of many land-use types, such as pasture, row crops, orchards, woods, residences, and wetlands.

White Water Associates studied four contiguous townships north of Grand Rapids: Algoma, Cannon, Courtland and Plainfield. These townships have experienced rapid growth in development, with increasing areas of formerly intact agricultural land subdivided into rural residences on small acre parcels.

Included in the experiment were special roadside reflectors. The premise of reflectors is that, properly installed and spaced, they reflect vehicle headlights to create a low-intensity moving beam of red light that serves as a deterrent to animal movement while it is present, without interfering with driver vision.

The analysis showed no significant differences before and after using the reflectors.



## Every 27 seconds, someone dies in a traffic crash

Analysis is underway of 2003 crash data, but it remains clear that traffic crashes are still a leading killer in Michigan, the United States, and the world. The World Health Organization recently totaled the annual global death toll from crashes at 1,183,492, more than the populations of Detroit and Grand Rapids combined.

Nationally, there are about 43,000 traffic fatalities a year and about 1,300 in Michigan.

Someone in...	dies in a traffic crash every...
the world	27 seconds
the United States	12 minutes
Michigan	7 hours

Despite improvements in vehicle technology and roadway engineering, education, enforcement techniques, and emergency medical care, traffic crashes remain the #1 cause of death before age 35 and a leading cause at all ages.

What is it that allows traffic crashes to far out-

strip homicide and all other non-disease causes of death?

### Major Factors in Michigan Fatal Crashes

Non-Use of Safety Belts/Helmets	42.4%
Alcohol or Drugs	40.4%
Excessive Speed	12.7%
Within Signalized Intersection	9.5%

– Michigan Traffic Crash Facts 2002

There is some good news, however. Safety belt use is up and alcohol-related fatalities are down.

“Traffic fatalities are human-caused and human-preventable. Most fatal crashes happen during the day, in clear weather,” said Pietro Semifero, mobilization coordinator for the Office of Highway Safety Planning. “Continuing to work toward systems that promote safety, ones that enforce safe driving while providing safe alternatives to it, will help us keep fatality trend heading downwards.”

# OHSP regional liaisons to provide traffic safety ‘link’

The Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) is enhancing its ability to network and consult with local units of government, local agencies, and community leaders on traffic safety issues by designating regional liaisons.

The liaisons will be responsible for representing the office in one of eight regions. They will attend meetings and functions such as Traffic Safety Committee and Metropolitan Planning Organization meetings, and other local events.

“Being able to put a face with a name is important and provides for important and meaningful feedback,” said OHSP Division Director Michael L. Prince. “These liaisons will serve as a point of contact on a local basis and in turn be able to provide referrals to resources and programs offered through OHSP and other state and federal agencies.”

**District 1** representative is Alicia Sledge – (517) 333-5321 or [sledgea@michigan.gov](mailto:sledgea@michigan.gov). This district includes Clinton, Eaton, Ingham, Gratiot, Hillsdale, Jackson, Lenawee, Livingston, and Shiawassee counties.

**District 2 (South)** representative is Pat Carrow – (517) 333-5315 or [carrowp@michigan.gov](mailto:carrowp@michigan.gov). This region includes Monroe, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties.

**District 2 (North)** representative is Dianne Perukel – (517) 333-5337 or [perukeld@michigan.gov](mailto:perukeld@michigan.gov). This region includes Macomb, Oakland, and St. Clair counties.

**District 3** representative is Steve Schreier – (517) 333-5306 or [schreies@michigan.gov](mailto:schreies@michigan.gov). This region includes Arenac, Bay, Genesee, Gladwin, Huron, Iosco, Lapeer, Midland, Ogemaw, Saginaw, Sanilac, and Tuscola.

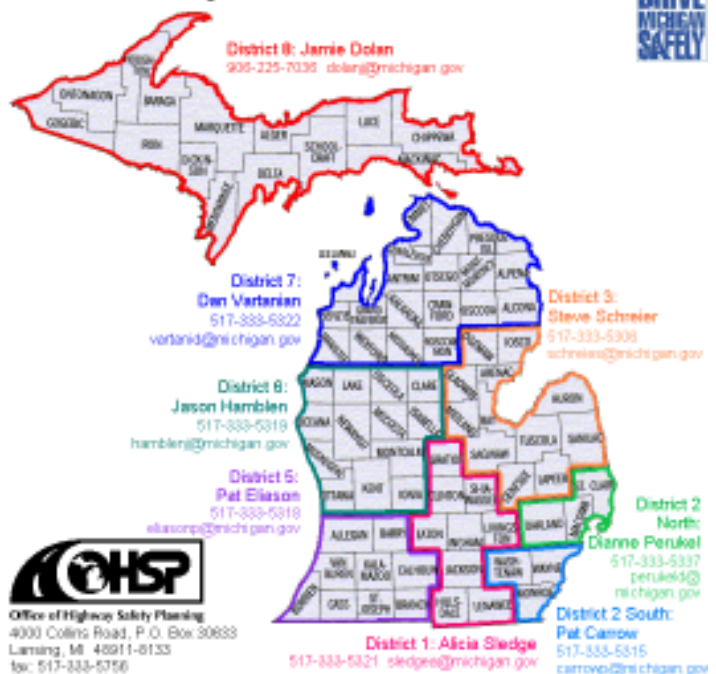
**District 5** representative is Pat Eliason – (517) 333-5318 or [eliasonp@michigan.gov](mailto:eliasonp@michigan.gov). This region includes Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, and Van Buren.

**District 6** representative is Jason Hamblen – (517) 333-5319 or [hamblenj@michigan.gov](mailto:hamblenj@michigan.gov). This region includes Clare, Ionia, Isabella, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Ottawa.

**District 7** representative is Dan Vartanian at (517) 333-5322 or [vartanid@michigan.gov](mailto:vartanid@michigan.gov). This region includes Alcona, Antrim, Alpena, Benzie, Cheboygan, Charlevoix, Crawford, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Manistee, Missaukee, Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle, Roscommon, and Wexford.

**District 8** representative is Jamie Dolan – (906) 225-7036 or [dolanj@michigan.gov](mailto:dolanj@michigan.gov). This region includes the entire Upper Peninsula.

OHSP Statewide Regional Liaisons



“Regional liaisons will provide OHSP with a much-needed ‘link’ to local communities and a valuable conduit for planning and communication on traffic safety issues and initiatives,” said Prince. “We encourage agencies and governmental units to contact them about meetings or events in your area or about any traffic safety concerns you may have.”



**The *You Drink & Drive. You Lose* mobilization is June 25 through July 11.**

**For more information about the campaign, please contact Jason Hamblen, Impaired Driving Program Coordinator, at (517) 333-5319.**

# Give 'em a Brake coalition urges caution in state's work zones

A memorial to those who lost their lives in roadway work zones was the centerpiece of the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Give 'em a Brake kickoff for work-zone safety May 6.

The memorial includes the names of deceased workers, law enforcement personnel, emergency personnel, motorists and their passengers. The names of 26 deceased Michigan road workers and one motorist are included on the seven-foot-high memorial wall.

MDOT's Give 'em a Brake safety awareness coalition urges motorists to slow down in work zones or face tough penalties. In Michigan, those penalties may include: double fines, Andy's Law penalties (which include fines and prison time for anyone convicted of criminal or civil infractions in a work zone), and increased points on a driver's record (one point more than for speeding outside a work zone).

MDOT will spend \$517,000 in work-zone enforcement this year, bringing together the Michigan State Police, county sheriffs and local police to help track down offenders in work zones.

The Give 'em a Brake coalition will spend nearly \$170,000 on a public awareness campaign which includes statewide billboards, radio and television spots. An animated character named "Bobby the Barrel" warns people that speeding through work zones is dangerous and illegal.

Highway work zones are considered the most hazardous place for workers in the United States – roadway construction workers are killed at a rate nearly three times higher than other construction workers and eight times higher than general industry workers, according to an American Road and Transportation Builders Association review of Bureau of Labor Statistics. The fatality rate for roadway construction workers is 32 people for every 100,000 workers.

## 1997-2003 Michigan Work Zone Crash Data

YEAR	Crashes	Injuries	Fatalities
1997	6,638	2,510	15
1998	7,049	2,379	21
1999	7,291	2,226	26
2000	6,562	2,018	9
2001	6,475	1,893	16
2002	6,260	1,726	17
2003	5,800	1,636	11

## OHSP isn't clowning around - sets goal of 90 percent belt use

The Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) has new materials available at the Michigan Resource Center to help promote safety belt use and enforcement.

A new poster (OP252P), shown at right, can be ordered via the MRC website at [www.michiganresourcecenter.org](http://www.michiganresourcecenter.org), by fax at (517) 882-7778, or by calling (800) 626-4636.

Also, Buckle Up stencils and pavement spray paint will soon be available through MRC. When painted on a sidewalk or driveway exit, the stencil serves as a reminder to buckle that safety belt. The stencils will be available on a loan basis. Yellow spray paint will also be provided.



## Carrow coordinating Safe Communities

A couple of changes in program areas have occurred at the Office of Highway Safety Planning.

Patricia Carrow has now added the oversight of the Safe Communities program to her duties. The program was coordinated by Dan Vartanian, who is now concentrating more heavily on corporate outreach and the Michigan Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS).

In addition, Carrow oversees the school bus safety, mature driver, and diversity program areas.

She can be reached at (517) 333-5315 or [carrowp@michigan.gov](mailto:carrowp@michigan.gov).

# GTSAC awards presented at Traffic Safety Summit

The Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission presented 13 awards at its annual awards luncheon April 28 at the Holiday Inn South in Lansing. Each year, the commission honors organizations, programs and individuals for outstanding contributions to traffic safety. The awards luncheon was part of the Ninth Annual Michigan Traffic Safety Summit.

## **2003 Outstanding Traffic Safety Achievement Award recipients**

### **Comcast Cable**

Comcast Cable stations donated extensive time to air television public service announcements (PSA) about the change in Michigan's drunk driving law, which made .08 blood-alcohol content the new drunk driving standard in 2003. The drunk driving PSA aired 19,000 times on its stations, helping alert the motoring public about the change in the state's law.

### **Livonia Police Department**

The Livonia Police Department reduced traffic crashes by more than 20 percent at six high-crash locations through its Strategic Traffic Accident Reduction program. The department utilized publicity, public information and enforcement. Driver stress and impatience, proper following distance and common courtesy on the roadway were the focal points of the public education efforts.

### **Oakland County Roundabout**

Three Oakland County agencies – the road commission, Rochester and Rochester Hills – were honored for improving safety and traffic-flow at the intersection of Washington, Tienken and Runyon streets by installing a roundabout. The new roundabout operated crash-free for the first nine months it was open.

### **Ingham County Roundabout**

The Ingham County Road received its award for improving traffic safety in Okemos by constructing a roundabout at the intersection of Hamilton and Marsh roads. Since the roundabout was constructed, back-ups at the intersection have been virtually eliminated.

### **West Shores Safe Communities Coalition**

The West Shore Safe Communities Coalition was honored for its Safe Senior Drivers project. The program focuses on: driver assessment, driver education, a social marketing campaign and roadway improvements. Inexpensive roadway improvements, such as widening pavement markings, are also underway.

### **Ron and Laurie Mayes, Todd and Cheryl Whitsitt**

Ron and Laurie Mayes of Hemlock and Todd and Cheryl Whitsitt of Saginaw, were honored for having

the courage to publicize the personal heartbreak of losing three daughters to drunk drivers in hopes of preventing similar tragedies. The families helped area law enforcement raise \$3,000 for a billboard with the powerful message, "You Live With Your Decision to Drink and Drive . . . Others Die From It," and the images of three young women killed by drunk drivers. It is dedicated to the lives of sisters, Shannon and Heather Mayes, who were 20 and 14 respectively, when they died in October 2000, and Trisha Whitsitt, 21, who was killed in August 2001.

### **Trooper Christine Grabowski**

Michigan State Police Trooper Christine Grabowski of the Iron River Post increased safety belt and bike helmet usage among students in Iron County to earn her award. Grabowski made presentations on the importance of using bike helmets at schools and then rewarded students wearing a bike helmet with a coupon for a free ice cream. She also observed high school parking lots gave food coupons to drivers and passengers who were buckled up. Those not wearing their safety belts were stopped and advised about the law and the rewards program.



*Betty J. Mercer receives her award from Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land during the Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Commission awards luncheon.*

### **Richard H. Austin Long-Term Traffic Safety Award Betty J. Mercer, J.D.**

Betty Mercer was honored for her tireless efforts to reduce traffic-related deaths and injuries during her 10-year tenure as director of the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning. Tremendous strides in traffic safety were made between 1992 and 2002 under Mercer's leadership, including the enactment of a zero tolerance law for drivers under 21, a graduated drivers license program, a primary safety belt law and a repeat offender package. Mercer is credited with spearheading efforts to see that the implementation of each of those laws was as smooth as possible and that information was available to law enforcement

*Continued on page 8*

# GTSAC awards presented at Traffic Safety Summit

*Continued from page 7*

officers and motorists were well informed of the changes in the law. Mercer retired from state government in April 2003.

## Thomas O. Reel, P.h.D,

Tom Reel has been dedicated to traffic safety in both the public and private sectors for the past 35 years. He has served as president of the Traffic Safety Association of Michigan for the past 25 years. Prior to that, Reel served as OHSP director for four years. He also served as a traffic safety specialist for the Michigan Department of State and as director of traffic and safety for the Automobile Club of Missouri. Reel is a member of the National Safety Council's International Advisory Committee for Defensive Driving and is extensively involved in truck driver training and evaluation.



*Award recipient Tom Reel is pictured with his wife, Nancy.*



*Richard H. Austin Long-Term Traffic Safety Award recipient Marjorie Reynaert is pictured with Office of Highway Safety Planning Division Director Michael L. Prince.*

## Marjorie Reynaert

Standing at the corner of California and Greater Mack, Marjorie Reynaert has been making sure children in St. Clair Shores cross the street safely on their way to and from elementary school since 1953. Starting as a crossing guard for St. Joan of Arc, Reynaert now crosses children attending Elmwood Elementary. A woman who feels age is simply a number, Reynaert has no plans to retire anytime soon.

## OHSP Staff:

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